

Restaurants in the Oakland Area

**College Avenue
Piedmont-Lake Merrit
Old Oakland
Chinatown
Broadway
Jack London Square**

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Introduction

0

This is the Oakland section of Restaurants in the Berkeley Area. It concentrates on restaurants near the downtown region and on College Avenue. It has been on the Web at <http://RNC.LBL.gov/RestOak/> since mid 2003. The authors alone are responsible for the information provided and the opinions expressed.

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New

1

Since the last revision the following restaurants are **new**: César on Piedmont, Flavors of India, Somerset, Wood Tavern, and Xyclo. The following are **newly included**: none. The following have **closed**: Grasshopper. Turnover is frequent, so it is always wise to check ahead. Many close early on Sunday and are closed on Monday.

2

College Avenue

Mitama

3

3201 College Ave. at Alcatraz

652-6157

At the Berkely-Oakland border, you will find this corner storefront Japanese restaurant. There's a small sushi bar, the tables are nicely spaced, and the modern atmosphere is quiet. Service is friendly and families are welcome. The sushi is very fresh, but the tempura tends to be a little greasy. Portions are somewhat small and the prices are high end. There's a good choice of sake, too. A nice place for lunch also. Worth a try if you are in the area.

Flavors of India

4

3211 College Ave. at Alcatraz

658-3461

A new small, nicely decorated, informal place offering quite delicious Indian food, including a number of excellent small plates, huge inexpensive tandoori wrap sandwiches, and more. It can get pretty crowded at peak dining times, and service can lag, but it's worth the wait. One of the better Indian places in this part of town.

Wood Tavern

5

6317 College Ave. south of Alcatraz

654-6607

This extremely noisy, lively and popular place offers really delicious California eclectic cuisine in a gorgeously designed space. The food prices are fairly high, there are many unusual wine choices, all too expensive, and they offer some great cocktails too. The chef is particularly good with the meat dishes. Don't expect to hear your dinner partners in the din, just sit back, enjoy the food, and talk later.

Nan Yang Rockridge

6

6048 College Ave. south of Claremont

655-3298

This is a justly popular Burmese restaurant in the Rockridge area, with a menu featuring a variety of unusual soups, salads, noodles, and main dishes. Everything is uniformly tasty and very fresh in flavor. The atmosphere is bright and lively, the prices moderate, service quick and friendly. There are just a few outdoor tables, with heat lamps, for eating al fresco.

Barclay's

7

5940 College Ave.

654-1650

A popular pub, with a very informal atmosphere, and a wide selection of ales and beers. The food is simple, the portions generous and the spicing assertive. It's fun to do a beer tasting here, and the staff can make good suggestions as to what to try. It gets very crowded and noisy here on a weekend night, but that's part of the charm of the place. There are some outdoor tables. One of the few places serving food after 10 p.m., even on Sunday.

Somerset

8

5912 College Ave. at Chabot

428-1823

Decorated in California Craftsman style, with dark wood paneling and widely spaced tables, this is a new great place for a terrific lunch or brunch, and a good if not great dinner. Prices are really reasonable for the huge portions. Service is wonderfully welcoming and friendly, and children are welcome. The noise level is totally manageable, and there's a lovely outdoor patio for warm days and nights. This place is definitely worth a try!

Barney's Hamburgers

9

5819 College Ave. just north of Rockridge

601-0444

A branch of a popular chain (others are on Solano Ave. and on Shattuck Ave. at Cedar). Good for huge hamburgers with all kinds of toppings, soups, large salads, milk shakes, wine and beer. The french fries are terrific, and a half-order is plenty! In my opinion this is the best Barney's because of the lovely shady patio in back, which is wonderful for lunch or a warm evening.

Oliveto

10

5655 College Ave. at Rockridge BART

547-5356

This two level architecturally interesting place, within the Market Hall complex of shops, features delicious, hearty, and expensive Mediterranean cuisine. The presentation is simple and reflects whatever is in season. Wines are outrageously overpriced. Good service but noisy, and reservations are recommended. Downstairs is a less formal cafe, with lower prices and no need to reserve. This is a popular favorite for a special meal.

Pearl Oyster Bar

11

5634 College Ave. near Rockridge BART

654-5426

This Oyster bar and restaurant in Rockridge is open for lunch and dinner. Beyond a discreet storefront entrance you will find an elegant and sophisticated space with a wonderful choice of rather expensive oysters and shellfish. There are many small plates of lovely salads, crab cakes, chowder, and a selection of larger dishes. The sweet potato fries are a must, and some of the wines are reasonably priced. The quality is excellent.

Citron

12

5484 College Ave.

653-5484

This lovely place features inventive bistro food with an elegant touch. It is very popular, and one of my favorites. The small, well chosen menu changes with the seasons, but everything is quite good. Prices are expensive, but worth it if you order carefully. Reservations are essential for dinner, but not at lunchtime. There is a beautiful back patio for outdoor dining, when weather permits. This should be on your list for "something special".

A Coté

13

5478 College Ave. next to Citron

655-6469

A popular place, this storefront space has been transformed into a plush, dimly lit, intimate cafe featuring French bistro inspired small plates, along with a large selection of wines and cocktails. Prices are high, especially for the wine, but this does not deter the crowds. The food can be great or merely good, depending on what you order, and the bill will be expensive for what you get. Open late -- go at an off hour to snag a table.

Soi4

14

5421 College Ave.

655-0889

An upscale Thai restaurant in Rockridge, located in a serene architecturally beautiful space. There is a full bar, with a large choice of cocktails. The service is solicitous, and the food has all of the standards, along with some unique dishes, too. The tables are nicely spaced, perfect for intimate conversation. The owners are gearing this towards a glamorous crowd. However, all of this comes with high end prices, to my mind not warranted.

Uzen

15

5415 College Ave.

654-7753

In a small storefront in the Rockridge area you will find this spare, high ceilinged, eclectically decorated Japanese restaurant. The small menu features distinctive sushi, along with noodle and rice dishes. The sushi is fresh and excellent, but the choice is often small. Lunchtime prices are moderate, but dinner can get pricey. There's a large selection of sakes along with the Japanese beers. This place can get quite crowded on weekend nights.

Garibaldi's

16

5356 College Ave.

595-4000

A spacious beautifully designed restaurant, with elegant and sophisticated decor, and a Mediterranean menu. Open for lunch and dinner, the food is good, portions generous, service friendly, but the prices are a bit high. There is a full bar, as well as a large wine list with high prices. This can get very noisy when crowded.

Marica

17

5301 College Ave.

985-8388

This is a wonderful small storefront location in Rockridge with decor somewhat Art Moderne and lovely lighting. The small menu is almost exclusively seafood, beautifully presented and prepared. There's a raw bar also, if you are an oyster fan, as well as cocktails and wine. It is definitely worth a try.

Cuvae

18

5299 College Ave.

655-1733

On outer College Avenue you will find this Asian Fusion French bistro. The decor is coolly sleek Art Deco, the food interesting and fresh. There are both outdoor tables and a dining room in back. Service is casual, tables nicely spaced. The small plates are not expensive, but the larger plates are high end in price. There is a very small wine list. This is not a sophisticated restaurant with haute cuisine, but it is fine when you want a pleasant casual experience.

Pizzaiolo

19

5008 Telegraph Ave. south of 51st St.

652-4888

Extremely popular, this is a great Italian restaurant offering unusual thin crusted pizzas, along with creative delicious pastas. The menu choices change often, but everything is wonderful. Reservations are now taken so there's no need to wait. Wines are decently priced, and there's a good selection of beers. Waitpersons are individualistic, and service can be slow when crowded, but do not miss this fine place!

Dona Tomas	20
5004 Telegraph Ave. south of 51st St. 450-0522	
<p>Take yourself to this out of the way location to discover a fabulous menu of authentic Mexican food with a California flair. The restaurant consists of adjoining storefronts decorated with folk art, as well as a lovely heated patio out back. The food is always tasty and different, the prices moderately high but worth it, the service professional and friendly. There is a large choice of cocktails to enhance your dining, as well as well priced wine. Highly recommended.</p>	

21
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Piedmont Ave Lake Merrit</h2>

Bay Wolf Café	22
3853 Piedmont Ave. 655-6004	
<p>Converted Victorian house, warm and cozy. Elegant, expensive, inventive California menu and wonderful wines. If duck is on the menu, order it! Famous in the East Bay, rightfully so. Reservations required. Professional and knowledgeable service. This is one of my favorite "fancy" restaurants in the East Bay. Open for lunch, too. The heated deck is available at all times, and allows for quieter dining.</p>	

Jojo	23
3859 Piedmont Ave. 985-3003	
<p>This is a very small fine restaurant featuring superb, eclectic, sophisticated French cuisine, with a well chosen menu, lovely wines, and professional service. The menu changes according to the season, but the confit of duck leg is great. The desserts are especially good, too. The space is compact, but the friendliness of the service makes up for the crunch. Food prices moderately high, wine even more so. Here's another favorite to add to your list.</p>	

César Piedmont	24
4039 Piedmont Ave. at 40th St. 985-1200	
<p>A new Oakland branch of a Berkeley favorite, it offers a wonderful large and lively space and an expanded menu of both small and large plates, along with a retail space for specialty foods. It's open throughout the day until fairly late at night, and has been extremely popular from day one. Prices depend on what you order, the food is well spiced, the cocktails and wine great, the ambiance both friendly and sophisticated. This is a great place for hanging out.</p>	

Xyclo	25
4218 Piedmont Ave. at Ridgeway 654-2681	
<p>Wonderful upscale Vietnamese food in a quiet, nicely decorated small storefront. Tables are well spaced for easy conversation. The Vietnamese rolls are especially delicious and inventive, but everything on the menu is fresh and tasty, with lots of vegetarian choices. Prices are moderate for the quality of the food, service is friendly, and even the wines are moderately priced. Definitely recommended!</p>	

Dopo	26
4293 Piedmont Ave. near Echo 652-dopo	
<p>This cafe occupies two adjoining storefronts, with a few outside tables. The chef owner is an alumnus of Chez Panisse, and his cooking is wonderfully fresh and seasonal. The menu is limited -- small plates, creative pizzas, panini, salads, and pastas, and everything is really delicious. Service friendly and personal. No reservations taken, so try to go at an off hour. Open for lunch on weekdays, too.</p>	

Luka's	27
2221 Broadway at W. Grand 451-4677	
<p>This taproom, restaurant, lounge, and hangout has a little bit of everything. The menu offers a wide range of Belgian bistro food, with shellfish platters, mussels, frites, and sandwiches as well as more substantial dishes. There's a huge list of beers as well as cocktails and wine. Prices are moderate, service casual. Mondays are noisy \$1 oyster nights. Later on there's music, dancing, and a pool table. Don't miss this experience!</p>	

Mezze	28
3407 Lakeshore Ave. near Trestle Glen 663-2500	
<p>An open and airy restaurant that features Mediterranean cooking, offering a number of small plates as well as more substantial dishes. The prices are moderately high, the service warm and welcoming. When crowded, this place can get noisy, but it's a worthwhile place to try because of some of the unusual menu items.</p>	

Di Bartolo	29
3306 Grand Ave. up from Grand Lake 451-0576	
<p>An urban Oasis on a bustling street full of small shops, this restaurant has a no reservations policy, but it is definitely worth any wait. The decor is chic, hard edges, black and chrome, and it does get noisy, but you feast on a delicious menu of moderately priced Mediterranean food. The pizzas have a thin crackling crisp crust, the fish is perfectly cooked, and the service professional. Wines a bit high priced, though. Worth a visit for sure.</p>	

30

Old Oakland

Le Cheval

31

1007 Clay St.

763-8957

A large, crowded, and very popular Vietnamese restaurant with a huge menu and moderate prices. Lunch is a real bargain, and the service speedy. This place can get really noisy when full, so beware. The cuisine features lots of meat dishes, but there are a number of vegetarian choices too. There is also a busy take-out counter. There is a validated parking lot around the corner. Be prepared to wait on weekend nights.

Pacific Coast Brewing

32

906 Washington St.

836-2739

Located in an historic building very close to the Convention center is this fine brewpub, offering a large menu of beers brewed on site, as well as "guest" draft beers. The small menu has very moderately priced soups, salads, sandwiches, and pizza. The food is decent and hearty, but not as outstanding as the beer! Open for both lunch and dinner, this is a good choice for an informal meal, or a place to hang out and drink.

B

33

499 9th St. at Washington

251-8770

In a beautifully restored Old Oakland building you will find this restaurant, featuring California eclectic cuisine, a choice of interesting delicious appetizers and salads, none very expensive, as well as a few more pricey main dishes. The pizzas are quite special. The cooking can sometimes be uneven. The wine list, with many unusual choices, is too expensive. It can get noisy when crowded, but the service is good. Open for lunch. Worth a try.

Cafe 817

34

817 Washington St.

271-7965

A lovely art filled place, close to the Convention Center, open only for breakfast and lunch. The menu choices are small, but everything is fresh and delicious. The Italian sandwiches are wonderful. The peaceful atmosphere is a plus when you want to get away from the crowds, read your paper and enjoy a delicious coffee.

35

Chinatown

Oakland Chinatown

36

7th to 12th Sts. btw. Franklin and Harrison

This is an area that is having a huge surge in growth, and is full of wonderful inexpensive restaurants and cafes: Chinese, Burmese, Vietnamese, Korean, etc. Go for a dim sum lunch some day, or just tour the neighborhood, exploring some of the side streets too, and try whatever place smells good and is crowded! You can also get something "to go", and munch as you walk. Most of the following places mentioned are extremely simple, but do not let that deter you.

Sushi Zone

37

388 9th St., 10th btw. Webster and Franklin

893-9663

A serenely beautiful and modern oasis located on the second floor of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza, an Asian shopping mall, this place features wonderful sushi, as well as other Japanese favorites, some with a California French twist. The dishes are fairly priced, although some of the unusual sushi combinations can get expensive. At lunchtime, there are low priced featured specials. This is a place where you can enjoy a quiet meal.

Peony

38

388 9th St., 10th btw. Webster and Franklin

286-8866

Located on the second floor of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza, is this extremely large and popular Chinese restaurant, featuring excellent dim sum at lunch, and specializing in banquets at night. Everyone seems to order the special Peking Duck. There is always a crowd waiting, the place is noisy and bustling, and the prices are high end for the cuisine. But the food is good, and it is a fine choice for a large group.

Yo Ho

39

337 8th St. btw. Webster and Harrison

268-0233

Extremely simple, this storefront restaurant is definitely authentic, with a mostly Chinese clientele and the menu specials listed only in Chinese. However, there is also an English menu available and the waitpersons are friendly and willing to explain. What draws the crowds is impeccably fresh seafood prepared in a variety of ways, and ridiculously low prices. Choose your fish or crab from the tanks at the rear, sit back and enjoy this unique experience.

Joy Luck 40 327 8th St. btw. Webster and Harrison 832-4270 Follow the local crowds always waiting at this Chinese restaurant, and you will find good food at incredibly low prices. No atmosphere, tables crowded together, noisy, everyone feasts on a large choice of fresh seafood dishes, along with more typical menu items. This is an especially good place for dim sum at lunchtime, when you can eat generously for very little money. Service is quick, if impersonal.	Legendary Palace 41 708 Franklin St. 663-9188 This place is more upscale than most others in the area, both in decoration and prices. It features Hong Kong style dim sum and seafood. The shrimp are supposed to be especially good. This translates into higher prices, more solicitous service, and very fresh fish. The other choices are less distinctive. Only you can decide whether the decoration and food warrant the cost.
42 <div>Broadway</div>	Saigon 43 1526 San Pablo Ave. 465-4545 In Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall Plaza), 15th St. west of B'way is this simple place with excellent Vietnamese food. Popular at lunchtime, when you can sit outside in the sunny plaza, the menu features huge bowls of pho, or refreshing cold vermicelli noodle salads called bun, with a variety of toppings. Prices are low, service friendly. At night it is quieter, and there are more menu choices. The Vietnamese crepe, offered only at night, is great!
City Center Mall 44 13th St. btw. Broadway and Clay This small pleasant mall has a wealth of informal cafes offering quick breakfasts and decent lunches. The foods range from bagels and espresso to pasta and burritos. Nothing is expensive, and on sunny days you can take advantage of a large number of outdoor tables and benches. At lunchtime, it becomes crowded with workers from the nearby office buildings. There are also a few shops, a bookstore, and easy access to BART.	Verbena 45 1111 Broadway at 11th 465-9300 Hidden away in the back lobby of a high rise office building close to Oakland's City Center is this delightful sophisticated place, which is well worth seeking out. Warm atmosphere, tables nicely spaced, a lovely bar, there's a beautiful patio, too. The food is California eclectic, nicely done, prices moderately high but worth it. Popular at lunch, it is very quiet at dinner. Not open on weekends, but give it a try, and you won't regret it!
Battambang 46 850 Broadway 839-8815 This is a small informal restaurant that features Cambodian cuisine, with many unusual menu items, all moderately low in price. The atmosphere is quiet, service is friendly, and tables nicely spaced so that you can have a quiet conversation. It is worth a try for something different, and is usually not too crowded.	La Furia Chalaca 47 310 Broadway 451-4206 A small restaurant that features Peruvian cooking at very moderate prices. The atmosphere is pleasantly quiet and comfortable, the tables nicely decorated with white cloths and flowers. The service is informal but friendly. The food has some unusual dishes featuring potatoes in numerous guises, as well as more typical meat and seafood choices. The sangria is much too expensive, but there is wine and beer.
Soizic 48 300 Broadway on 3rd St. 251-8100 A wonderful restaurant not far from Jack London Square, featuring fresh Californian-Asian cuisine at moderately high prices. This is definitely the best restaurant in the area. The cooking here is of high caliber, flavorful, with lovely presentation. Wines are somewhat high priced, atmosphere simple and quiet. This is a popular place, both at lunch and dinner, so reservations are recommended. There is a private room for groups.	Oakland Grill 49 301 Franklin St. 835-1176 An extremely informal and funky place, good for generous breakfasts and lunches. Open for dinner too. Don't expect high end gourmet cooking, but the food is good and the prices moderate. Located in the middle of the wholesale produce district, it's worth a try for something different.

Everett and Jones

50

126 Broadway

663-2350

Very popular, always crowded, generally noisy, this place features Barbecue in all its combinations. The service is friendly, the atmosphere extremely informal, and everyone seems to be having a great time. Open late on weekends, the portions are generous, the prices moderate.

Jack London Square

52

bottom of Broadway from Clay to Alice

At the bottom of Broadway, (watch out for the trains as you cross Embarcadero), facing the inner harbor, you will find Jack London Square, stretching a few blocks in either direction. There is a lovely walkway along the water. At one end you will find the First and Last Chance Saloon, which is a must-see, at the other end a ferry to San Francisco. Also there is a great Barnes and Noble Bookstore, many interesting shops, cafe's and restaurants.

TGI Friday's

54

bottom of Broadway

451-3834

Noisy, boisterous, and informal, this appeals to young people and families looking for standard American food: burgers and sandwiches, salads, ribs, fish and chips, etc. Nothing is too expensive. Also a popular place for weekday "happy hours". Service is quick and very friendly.

Kincaid's

56

One Franklin St. in Jack London Square

835-2032

This place is somewhat formal and dark, with wood interiors. It overlooks the water, so ask for a table with a view, if possible. The large moderately expensive menu features steaks and chops as well as seafood. This is a popular place for business lunches but is quieter at night and on weekends. Service efficient and professional.

Hahn's Hibachi

58

Embarcadero and Franklin

628-0717

This is a simple informal place featuring low priced Korean style barbecue, chicken, ribs and chops. There are also some Japanese dishes, such as udon and tempura. This is not the place for a fancy gourmet dinner, but it is tasty and quick.

Jack London Square

51

Yoshi's

53

510 Embarcadero West

238-9200

Architecturally stunning, this restaurant facing Jack London Sq. features Japanese cuisine in a large quiet dining area with a sushi bar, and an acoustically superb performance space. The food is improving, but the real draw is the music late into the night, at what is one of the top Jazz Clubs in the Bay Area. Prices are moderate to slightly expensive. This is not my favorite Japanese restaurant, but the music makes it special.

Scott's

55

bottom of B'way on the water

444-3456

A large and busy upscale seafood restaurant on the waterfront, featuring decent cooking, professional friendly service, and well spaced tables. Popular with large groups and families, get a table overlooking the water if you can. Prices are upscale, there's a huge menu, and the food is good if you stick to the simpler presentations. Reservations recommended, especially on weekends.

Pescatore

57

near Franklin St. in Jack London Square

465-2188

An Italian restaurant that specializes in garlic infused pastas, as well as a choice of seafood. It is located on the water, so the tables with a view are preferred. The atmosphere is friendly and informal, the prices moderate.

Authors

59

<http://RNC.LBL.gov/Restaurants/>

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Index

A Coté 13
B 33
Barclay's 7
Barney's Hamburgers 9
Battambang 46
Bay Wolf Café 22
Cafe 817 34
César Piedmont 24
Citron 12
City Center Mall 44
Cuvaé 18
Di Bartolo 29
Dona Tomas 20
Dopo 26
Everett and Jones 50
Flavors of India 4
Garibaldi's 16
Hahn's Hibachi 58
Jack London Square 52
Jojo 23
Joy Luck 40
Kincaid's 56
La Furia Chalaca 47
Le Cheval 31
Legendary Palace 41
Luka's 27
Marica 17
Mezze 28
Mitama 3
Nan Yang Rockridge 6
Oakland Chinatown 36
Oakland Grill 49
Oliveto 10
Pacific Coast Brewing 32
Pearl Oyster Bar 11
Peony 38
Pescatore 57
Pizzaiolo 19
Saigon 43
Scott's 55
Soi4 14
Soizic 48
Somerset 8
Sushi Zone 37
TGI Friday's 54
Uzen 15

Verbena 45
Wood Tavern 5
Xyclo 25
Yo Ho 39
Yoshi's 53